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OUTGOING MESSAGE

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CLASSIFICATION

MESSAGE HANDLING INDICATOR

DATE-TIME GROUP: CIA/OCI/WHIZWH

CITE: 74050L

MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

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CIA/NHIS

SOURCE REF:

ROUTING

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2		5		8		11	
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SUBJECT: CAMBODIA/LAOS--SIHANOUK'S RECENT INTEREST IN CONTACTING

25X1 THE US

THE LAO COMMUNISTS CLAIM THAT PRINCE SIHANOUK SOUGHT THEIR AID EARLIER THIS YEAR IN ESTABLISHING DIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE US. IN A MESSAGE RELAYED TO AMBASSADOR DEAN IN PHNOM PENH, LAO COMMUNIST FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUNI VONGVICHIT SAID THAT SIHANOUK MADE THE REQUEST DIRECTLY TO LAO COMMUNIST LEADER SOUPHANOUVONG DURING SIHANOUK'S VISIT TO SAM NEUA IN MARCH. SOUPHANOUVONG REPORTEDLY DECLINED TO ACT AS AN INTERMEDIARY AND INSTEAD URGED SIHANOUK TO USE PEKING'S GOOD OFFICES TO CONTACT WASHINGTON.

SIHANOUK PUBLICLY REVIVED THE SUBJECT OF DIRECT TALKS WITH THE US IN STATEMENTS ISSUED FROM SAM NEUA IN MARCH. AT THE SAME

DATE:
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UNIT:
EXT:

State Department review completed

25X1

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TIME SIHANOUK'S "PRIME MINISTER" SAID THAT SUCH TALKS WERE THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE FORM OF NEGOTIATIONS AND CLAIMED THAT IF THE US DID NOT RESPOND THE WAR WOULD CONTINUE "AS LONG AS POSSIBLE." PHOUMI'S MOTIVES IN REVEALING SIHANOUK'S APPROACH AT THIS LATE DATE ARE NOT CLEAR. PHOUMI AND AMBASSADOR BEAM WORKED CLOSELY TOGETHER DURING THE PROTRACTED LAO NEGOTIATIONS. [redacted] 25X1

(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION: EAP DIV AND NIO [redacted] 25X1

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